

VIRGINIA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM MODEL

Virginia's model of refugee resettlement originates from the purpose of the refugee resettlement program at the federal level, namely, promoting effective resettlement through attaining self-sufficiency at the earliest time possible. It was developed by the Office of Newcomer Services in consultation with state level staff and representatives from private resettlement agencies and ethnic organizations, and is based on the following principles:

- Long-term public assistance utilization is not an acceptable way of life in America and is therefore not a resettlement option.
- A refugee's early employment promotes his/her earliest economic self sufficiency.
- Refugee resettlement involves many services which may be provided concurrently, progressively, and/or successively, but always in such a way that they constitute a continuum of services beginning with the voluntary agency (VOLAG) at arrival in the U.S. and continuing through self-sufficiency leading to citizenship.
- Self-reliance and a sense of personal responsibility must be integrated into the ONS Comprehensive Resettlement Plan (CRP) or a comparable alternative.
- Coalitions and linkages of service providers, where appropriate, to ensure strong public/private partnerships.
- Service providers must work in coordination with other agencies to maximize community resources and to create a seamless service delivery system.
- Services must be sensitive to cultural issues and must be implemented by staff that mirror the population served.
- Mutual assistance associations, which are incorporated organizations to address the social service needs of a specific refugee and/or ethnic population, bring unique strengths and cultural knowledge to the resettlement process.
- There must be barrier-free access to programs, activities, services, and entitlements that include language provision for all refugees.

ONS promotes a service model based on the belief that refugees are best served by a community-based system of care that is comprehensive, coordinated, and responsive to the strengths and needs of refugees and their families. Subsequently, these services must be:

- 1. Case Managed and Family Based**
- 2. Culturally and Linguistically Compatible**
- 3. Focused on Employment with Concurrent ESL/Supportive Services**
- 4. Provided Through Coalitions and/or Partnerships**
- 5. Work to Educate the Community and to Provide Outreach**
- 6. Utilize Volunteers and Mentors**